



Election Commission of Pakistan

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) For National /Domestic Observers /Media for General Elections 2024

Legal Provision for Election Observers:

Section 238 of the Elections Act 2017 states:

(1) *The Commission, at its own motion or upon an application made in this behalf may allow any domestic or international election observation organization to observe the process of conduct of election, having an access to polling station, counting of votes and consolidation of results.*

(2) *No person shall be allowed to observe the process of conduct of Election, if he—*

- a) is not accredited as an observer by the Commission or its authorized officer;*
- b) is affiliated with any political party;*
- c) fails to provide his full particulars and documents, including photographs, which may be required by the Commission;*
- d) has been involved in activities prejudicial to the peace and tranquility of the people of a constituency;*
- e) fails to provide an authorization from the organization of which he is a member; and*
- f) has not obtained security clearance from the Government*

(3) *Every observer while observing the process of conduct of election shall display prominently a card of his identification issued to him by the Commission or an officer authorized by it.*

(4) *Every observer or, as the case may be, organization may submit a report to the Commission highlighting the electoral irregularities which were noticed during observation relating to conduct of election, with recommendations, if any.*

ECP's Open-Door policy for Observers:

In light of the above Section of the Elections Act 2017, ECP has an “Open Door Policy” for media and observers (National and International) subject to fulfillment of codal formalities and that they shall abide by the Code of Conduct already issued. A large number of observers are expected to observe the upcoming General Elections; therefore ECP will issue Accreditation Cards in order to enable observers to observe the polling process and having access to polling stations and offices of the concerned Election officials.

Purpose of issuance of Accreditation Card

Election observation Accreditation Cards are official cards issued by the ECP to authorized individuals and organizations. The purpose of issuing this card to the observers and media personnel (National/Domestic), nominated by their Organizations is to give access to polling stations and offices of Returning Officers to observe the polling process and consolidation of results. These cards show the identity and legitimacy of holders, for observing and reporting on the electoral process.

Accreditation Cards issuance mechanism:

S. NO.	ISSUANCE OF CARD	ISSUING AUTHORITY	OBSERVATION JURISDICTION
i.	Accreditation Cards for National Observers/National Media at Islamabad	MCO Wing at ECP Secretariat, Islamabad.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The MCO wing of ECP Secretariat will issue Accreditation Cards to Islamabad based Central CSOs, central media and observer organizations• All the constituencies in the country
ii.	Provincial Headquarters	Provincial Election Commissioner (PEC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accreditation Cards will be issued to all sort of domestic NGOs, organizations and media in the case of their respective province• Provincial MCO Wings will coordinate with all stakeholders• All the constituencies in the respective Province
iii.	District level	District Returning Officer (DRO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accreditation Cards will be issued to the domestic observers and media• All the constituencies in the respective district

Following SOPs shall be taken into account for upcoming General Elections:

1. All domestic observer organizations shall apply to the concerned Issuing Authority of Election Commission as mentioned above for Accreditation Cards as and when Election Schedule is announced.
2. The application of every observer organization shall be accompanied with two sets of full particulars of observers (attaching a verified consolidated list containing names, parentage, address, gender, National Identity Card or Passport number (if applicable), contact number and email, two photos, NIC copy of each observer as well as area wise deployment of these observers).

3. Heads of all domestic observer organizations shall also provide an Affidavit / Undertaking about the conduct of the observers there under. (Declaration for affidavit is attached as annexure-I)
4. The National /local NGOs and civil society organizations shall apply for Accreditation Cards on the letter head of their organization (attaching a verified consolidated list containing names, parentage, address, gender, NIC number, contact number and email, two photos, NIC copy of each observer as well as area wise deployment of these observers) to the concerned Issuing Authority i.e. respective PEC or District Returning Officer and the concerned NGO shall also submit an affidavit provided which takes the responsibility of the conduct of their observers on the polling day. (Annexure-I)
5. National /local media, all the media persons/cameramen shall apply for Accreditation Cards on the letter head (attaching a verified consolidated list containing names, parentage, address, gender, NIC number, contact number and email, two photos and NIC copy of each observer as well as area wise deployment of these observers) through relevant Press Information Department (PID)/Information Department/Directorate General Public Relations (DGPR) as where available at Provincial/District level. After authenticating all the media persons who have applied for accreditation, the respective Press Information Department (PID) shall send the verified cases to the respective Issuing Authority i.e. MCO Wing of ECP Secretariat, PEC Office or concerned District Returning officer.
6. All domestic observers shall adhere to the Code of Conduct issued by the Election Commission of Pakistan in letter and spirit and would sign a pledge.(annexure -II)
7. All domestic observers would display their Accreditation Cards prominently and show it to the polling personnel and security personnel on demand. They must fully cooperate with the security personnel and polling personnel etc.
8. The Election Commission of Pakistan / Issuing Authority will have the right to cancel Accreditation Card of any observer at any time or decline the request of any domestic observer organization for issuance of Accreditation Cards.
9. The issuing authority of the Election Commission shall maintain a proper record of all cards issued and retain documents received from domestic/ national observers/media organizations. The DRO shall submit the details of Accreditation Cards issued by them to the respective PEC Office. The concerned PEC Office will send consolidated details of accreditation cards issued by all respective DROs and cards issued by PEC Office to MCO Wing of ECP Secretariat, Islamabad.

10. The observers will be assisted through the Information Kit available on ECP Official website and static Mobile based App titled ‘ECP Digital Information Toolkit for Media & Observers’ (link of the app will also be available on ECP’s official website). ECP will also disseminate awareness videos on all Code of Conducts on its social media accounts and website for observers.
11. Every observer or organization as the case may be, may share a report with ECP about its findings after completion of each electoral process along with recommendations (if any) to improve the electoral process.



1. I, hereby declare that the information provided for application of accreditation card is true and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.
2. I hereby declare that I have read and understood the Code of Conducts for National Observers 2023 and National Media 2023 issued by the Election Commission of Pakistan and undertook that the observers/media persons nominated by my Organization/media house will always follow and abide by it all times while observing the election process.
3. I hereby understand and agree that the ECP has the right to reject any application for accreditation that does not meet the requirements or that provides false or incomplete information.
4. _____ is a non-partisan organization and doesn't support any political party.
5. That observer to be deployed by _____ is Pakistani citizen enjoys good character, has not been involved in any criminal cases previously, and is not required by any enforcement agency.
6. That _____ takes all the responsibility for the security of the observer.
7. I hereby understand and agree that the ECP has the right to revoke or suspend the accreditation of any observer/media person who violates the code of conduct or who interferes with the election process in any way.

Signature:	Name:
Designation:	Date:
Email Address:	Mobile No.:

(Annexure-II)

PLEDGE/DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the information provided for application of accreditation card is true and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.

I hereby accept the content of code of conduct for National Media /Observers issued by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) and agree to abide by it at all times while observing the election process.

I hereby understand and agree that the ECP has the right to reject any application for accreditation that does not meet the requirements or that provides false or incomplete information.

I hereby understand and agree that the ECP has the right to revoke or suspend the accreditation of any observer who violates the code of conduct or who interferes with the election process in any way.

Signature:	Date:
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